

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claim 72 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the recited subject matter.

Please AMEND claims 70 and 74, as follows. For the Examiner's convenience, all claims currently pending in this application have been reproduced below:

1-69. (Cancelled)

70. (Currently Amended) An exposure apparatus comprising:

an illumination optical system for illuminating a reticle with illuminating light from a light source;

a projection optical system for projecting a pattern, which has been formed on the reticle, onto a photosensitive substrate;

a holding unit for holding the reticle;

a reticle transport system for transporting the reticle;

a substrate stage capable of holding and moving the substrate; and

a substrate transport system for transporting the substrate,

wherein at least one of a pair of said reticle transport system and said holding unit and a pair of said substrate transport system and said substrate stage is accommodated in a partitioned circulation space in which inert gas is filled and the inert gas is circulated by a circulating system having a temperature control mechanism, and the partitioned circulation space includes a connecting member which is airtight and flexible.

71. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 70, further including an air conditioning system which circulates temperature controlled gas in a space other than the partitioned circulation space.

72. (Cancelled)

73. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 70, further comprising a position detection system for detecting an alignment mark on the substrate,

wherein a pattern projection region for projecting the pattern onto the substrate by said projection optical system is formed at a position that is off-centered toward the side of said position detection system from the projection center of said projection optical system.

74. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim ~~70~~ 73, wherein said substrate transport system is disposed on the side of the projection region with respect to the projection center.

75. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 74, wherein said apparatus has a plurality of said position detection systems, and said plurality of position detections systems are disposed on the side of said projection region with respect to the projection center.

76. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 70, wherein a projection region of the pattern, which region is formed on the substrate via said projection optical system, is formed at a position that is off-centered with respect to the projection center of said projection optical system, and said mask transport system is disposed on the side of the illumination region with respect to the projection center.

77. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 70, wherein a projection region of the pattern, which region is formed on the substrate via said projection optical system, and an illumination region on the mask, are formed at positions that are off-centered to the same side with respect to the projection center of said projection optical system, and said mask transport system and said substrate transport system are disposed on the side of the projection region and an illuminating region with respect to the projection center.